IN MEMORIAM: DR. THOMAS W. SALMON[1]

The history of events is the history of men. The great body of men in any group—political, military, social, or be it professional, such as medicine, law, theology, education—contributes not a great deal to events. No professional group can rise much above the median of the general population; its intelligence, its culture, its emotional hindrances cannot be much above the general group from which it comes and in which it lives. Many must be dull, many must be routinists and time-servers, carrying on by rote what they have learned from their preceptors. There can be few —for any given time there are few in any general population— who have qualities so combined as to make it possible for them to change the current of events in any large way. This does not mean that they are unimportant. The integrity of a group or profession is dependent upon them, and the social value of the group is to be measured not by the occasional "biological sport," if you will, who is not representative of the whole, but by the average of the units composing the group. Each contributes his part in the maintenance of the group or profession, and the group as a whole may change mightily the course of social events, although the group moves across time as a sluggish river. However, events or change of current within the group, or even events or change of current in the relation of the group to contiguous territory or other groups, are made by men, in any given instance by a man, one who in his personality and character possesses a combination of qualities which we always recognize as rare. In the field of science those who have changed events have had intelligence and imagination—Virchow, Pasteur, Wassermann, Kraepelin, Freud, Starling, Darwin, Einstein, Millikan. Many men have intelligence, but not a few are unable to use the rare intelligence they have because of emotional handicaps. Many with intelligence lack imagination; many have imagination so unbridled as to be a pitfall; only a few in any given generation have intelligence and imagination combined in such a way as to cause them to stand out as more effective than their fellows. Through them events take place, history is changed, and man continues his conquest of the world and his own development.

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In those fields which combine science with living, which, if you will, relate science to life, represented by several professional groups, but by none more importantly, perhaps, than medicine, a still rarer combination of qualities is necessary—intelligence, imagination, and fine feeling. It is the latter that is the stumbling block. A hair may disturb the delicate balance when one is to weigh the quality which we can only name as fine feeling, sensitiveness, or a certain sensitiveness to living. A hair's weight too much, too little—the danger is greatest perhaps that it will be too much and change sentiment into sentimentality—and the combination is lost for greatest effectiveness. When occasionally this combination appears in an individual, that individual influences events that ten thousand men without this special combination of qualities cannot change.

I do not believe that under the circumstances of my writing I stress these qualities because Salmon possessed them; I believe I have been objective in arriving at them only to find that he had them. But whether or no, they were the qualities that are in evidence throughout all his work—in private practice, in the state hospital, in the Public Health Service, in the manifold activities of The National Committee for Mental Hygiene, in the psychiatric work of the Army, in the work of the Veterans' Bureau, in the planning of the new psychiatric center at Columbia University—qualities which made his work so strikingly effective, and made it possible to influence the course of events in American medicine, in the field of psychiatry and in contiguous social fields. They were the qualities, too, which tied men to him in a fine and close personal relationship.

Dr. Salmon, on receiving his diploma from the Albany Medical College in 1899, began his work as a private practitioner at Brewster, New York. Ill health developed and it was necessary for him to spend some time in the Adirondacks recuperating. Following his return to health, he entered the New York State Hospital Service as an assistant physician at the Willard State Hospital. This turned out to be an important step in his life, not only in that it gave him his first contact with psychiatric problems, which later came to be his main interest, but that it brought him in touch with Dr. William L. Russell, who at that time was also a member of the staff of the Willard State Hospital. A

friendship and professional relationship developed which continued throughout Dr. Salmon's life, and influenced in many ways his subsequent career. It is not generally known, perhaps, that during his period at the Willard State Hospital, Dr. Salmon studied a diphtheria epidemic that developed there and published two papers in regard to it. Probably because of his experiences in this epidemic, he seems to have become more interested for the moment in epidemiology than in psychiatry, and in 1903 he entered the United States Public Health Service. Here, however, he found other problems than those of epidemiology to challenge him—the neglect of deep-sea fishermen, for whom he advocated a hospital ship, which was eventually obtained; the problem of proper, even human care of insane immigrants held for deportation; the devising of methods for psychiatric examination of immigrants, and the like. Dr. Salmon contributed to other departments in the United States Public Health Service, but his chief service, perhaps, was in relation to the immigration service, to which he was assigned in 1905, and in this service to the examination and care of the insane. The time may not yet have come for writing the full history of the events of those days, and it is probably enough to say now that at that time, as a young man, he showed the same fearlessness and quiet courage, persistence and resourcefulness in the face of what would seem to be almost insurmountable obstacles, that he showed later as a mature man in meeting his part of the problems of a world crisis. Although he did not come off in this contest with indifference, bureaucracy and red tape the complete victor, he accomplished much, and his accomplishments were the beginning of the development of an adequate psychiatric service for immigrants at Ellis Island. This has meant much, both in the protection of immigrants, and in the protection of the country against the entrance of immigrants who, because of their mental condition, would become dependent upon the charities of various states. So serious had this situation become—the dependence of insane immigrants upon public charities—that the state of New York, probably the greatest sufferer, appointed a board of alienists to study the matter and, in 1911, Dr. Salmon obtained leave of absence from the United States Public Health Service to become the chief medical examiner of this New York State Board. From his work with this Board developed important protective legislation.

In 1909 there had been formed in New York, through the effort of Mr. Clifford W. Beers, and the assistance of such men as Professor William James, Dr. Adolf Meyer, Dr. August Hoch, Dr. William Mabon, and Dr. William L. Russell, an organization known as The National Committee for Mental Hygiene. This Committee had as its plan the improvement of the care of the insane throughout the country. When the plans had been sufficiently matured to warrant the employment of a younger man to undertake certain studies for the Committee, a fund for the purpose having been obtained, the Committee turned to Dr. Salmon who, in the years just previous, in his work in the immigration service and with the New York State Board of Alienists, had shown the qualities of intelligence and courageous leadership that the work demanded, and in 1912, with leave of absence from the United States Public Health Service, Dr. Salmon undertook for The National Committee for Mental Hygiene a special study of hospitals caring for patients with mental disease. He continued on leave from the United States Public Health Service until 1915, when, adequate funds having been obtained for the work of the Committee, he resigned from the United States Public Health Service and became the first Medical Director of The National Committee for Mental Hygiene. He remained as Medical Director of the Committee until January 1, 1922, when he resigned to enter private practice, having been appointed in 1921 Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University.

When one contemplates his accomplishments, it does not seem possible that in this period of years, 1912–1922, only five were devoted to laying foundations for the work of the National Committee, the other five having been devoted largely to war work of one kind or another. To be sure, the work during the war grew out of the work he had been doing and the foundations he had laid during the years 1912–1917, and the success of the work during the war reacted favorably in the subsequent development of the work he had previously planned. But it is not so much to the result I refer as to the amount of planning and getting under way that was accomplished during those five years, 1912–1917. There was nothing spectacular about that work. It did not attract great public attention as so many public health movements have done in their beginning. It

was solid, intelligent work that could have been planned only by one who sensed the significance of what he was doing, who saw clearly and looked well to the future. A library was established —not just a library, but a very special library. Not a collection of books that duplicated the shelves of almost any good public or medical library, but a library, carefully indexed, that held comparatively few books, but was rich in current reprints and extract material that had not been collected elsewhere. A Department of Hospital Service was organized to gather information in regard to the hospitals for mental disease in the country and to create a library of hospital plans, particularly of new constructions. A list of the public and private hospitals of the country was prepared; also a directory of the practicing psychiatrists and neurologists in each state and city, including an outline of their training. Methods were devised and forms prepared for the survey of state hospital systems and the general system by which states cared for their insane. At the request of governors, legislatures, and official boards, surveys were undertaken. Surveys in over thirty states have been made by the National Committee, most of these under Dr. Salmon's direction. In each survey recommendations were made looking toward the improvement of the care given to the insane, and in a more than gratifying number of instances these recommendations were carried out, or in large part carried out. A Department on Mental Deficiency was organized and a program devised for the identification, education and training, and, when necessary, proper segregation of the feeble-minded. The laws in the various states pertaining to the insane and the feeble-minded were compiled and published and an organization was created for collecting currently all new legislation upon these subjects. A Department of Uniform Statistics was created, and through the cooperation of the American Psychiatric Association a uniform nomenclature and a uniform method of statistical recording were adopted by hospitals for mental diseases throughout the country. For the purpose of studying the relation of mental disease and defect to delinquency, psychiatric clinics were established at Sing Sing Prison and the Juvenile Court of New York City and a psychiatric bureau at New York City police headquarters. This was not the first work that had been done in this field, previous work having been done

in Chicago by Healy and in Massachusetts by Stearns; but the work at Sing Sing was the first large study of its kind ever undertaken and from it has come much of the impetus that has carried forward similar studies since. In order that the layman might come to have a more intelligent and therefore more sympathetic understanding of the problems in the field of psychiatry, the quarterly journal, *Mental Hygiene,* was established.

These, of course, are not all of the activities that Dr. Salmon undertook as Medical Director of the National Committee, but they are sufficient to indicate the intellectual grasp he had of the problem he had before him and the large way he therefore went about organizing this new undertaking. As has been said, none of these things was spectacular, or designed to attract general public attention; each had importance in itself, but each was an integral unit in a whole; none gave large immediate returns, but each, as well as the whole, held potentialities for growth with increasing and sure effectiveness. Not many public movements are planned in this way. Other methods are usually preferred by young directors of new movements. Dr. Salmon's judgment in this matter was sound.

Two other major activities, probably the most important of his career, remain to be mentioned—his work during the war and the inception and carrying through of the plans for a psychiatric institute in connection with the new medical center at Columbia University. These, however, are so well known as to need here only briefly to be stated.

When one thinks of the general indifference to all psychiatric problems in 1917, it is little short of amazing what Dr. Salmon was able to accomplish. Not only was the general public uninformed, it was mostly misinformed in regard to the nature of war neuroses; the medical profession, largely as uninformed and misinformed as the lay public, held psychiatry in almost complete disregard—psychiatry was the Cinderella of medicine, as Dr. Salmon once phrased it—army officers were reared in a philosophy as alien as could be to the philosophy of conduct upon which the psychiatrist's work is based. What opportunity could there be for any work, let alone proper work, under such circumstances?

As is well known, Dr. Salmon was the Chief Consultant in Psychiatry in the American Expeditionary Force, and for his

services was awarded a distinguished service medal and was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General in the Medical Officers' Reserve Corps. One can well believe that he was properly proud of these things, but one knows full well what this war service meant to Salmon—that more than 80,000 deemed unfit were not needlessly and dangerously exposed to war; that thousands of young men, for whom exposure was too great, to-day owe their health and effectiveness to timely treatment; that many hundreds, officers and men, found available the assistance they needed at a critical moment to make their war service effective; that thousands who, unfortunately, are not now and have not been since their service in good health, have been well cared for from the day they became ill; that the services of a well-trained psychiatrist are no longer disregarded, but are sought to an extent that for the moment is embarrassing because of the comparatively small number available; that psychiatric data and the psychiatric point of view have permeated not only an army, but a social structure and are producing a reconstruction in social thinking. This, one feels sure, is what the war service meant to Dr. Salmon.

The new psychiatric institute, an integral part of the new medical center at Columbia University, will now stand as the culmination of Dr. Salmon's work. Such a center had long been in his mind, a center in which the ablest men could work advantageously, where the highest standards of therapy could be maintained—one puts this first, for it was the patient that Salmon always had first in mind—clinical and laboratory research carried on, and personnel trained; and a center in proper mutual relationship to other medical specialties and laboratory sciences. Due in large part to his efforts, such a center is now in process of building, and psychiatry and medicine may look forward to an opportunity they have not had before, and the sick of the community to an increasing understanding of their difficulties and increasing ability to assist them.

Dr. Salmon would be the first to decline the credit for the success of these two undertakings, pointing to others who had a part in each. But those who had a part in either or both would be the first to say that it was Dr. Salmon's vision, inspiration, intelligent planning, and resourcefulness that made success possible. Many have had important work to do in each, but there is no question to whom credit belongs.

Dr. Salmon influenced the course of medicine and psychiatry in America. The qualities that made it possible for him to do this are, I believe, the qualities I named in the beginning—intelligence, imagination, and fine feeling, or a certain sensitiveness to life. He was an idealist, but he was not a visionary. He was a practical idealist, not in the sense that he would sell his ideals for a mess of pottage, for a cheap and temporary accomplishment, but because his ideals were practicable, frequently more practicable (economical and sensible)—as no one could demonstrate so well as he—than the unideal, so-called practicable, economical, business-like, and common-sense plans proposed in opposition to his. This type of idealist the world cannot well do without.

Dr. Salmon was drowned in August while sailing on Long Island Sound. There survive him his work, his wife, six sons and daughters, and men and women both within and without the medical profession who admired him, who were his friends and who followed confidently his leadership in mental hygiene and psychiatry. He gave much and generously to them all and they can only hope that he found in these associations, in his work and in life those things he needed to make living valuable to him.

FRANKWOOD E. WILLIAMS
THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR MENTAL HYGIENE

Vita: Thomas William Salmon, born Lansingburg, New York, January 6, 1876; son Thomas H. (M.D.) and Annie E. (Frost) S.; M.D., Albany Medical College, 1899; married Helen Potter Ashley, of Lansingburg, Dec. 21, 1899; private practice and Willard (N. Y.) State Hospital, 1899–1903; commanding assistant surgeon U. S. Marine Hospital Service (now U. S. Public Health Service), October 29, 1903; passed assistant surgeon, 1908, resigned January 1, 1915; Chairman, New York State Board of Alienists, 1911; Director of Special Studies, The National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 1912–14; Medical Director, The National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 1915–21; staff, Rockefeller Foundation, 1915–21; Professor of Psychiatry, Columbia University, 1921–27; consulting psychiatrist, Presbyterian Hospital, 1922–27; Major, Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel, M. C., U. S. A., 1917–19; Brigadier-General, M. R. C.; senior consultant in neuropsychiatry, A. E. F.; awarded Distinguished Service

Medal; editor, Neuropsychiatric Volume, A. E. F. Section (History), The Medical Department of the United States Army in the World War; member, Permanent Inter-Allied Commission for the After-Care of Disabled Soldiers; member, International Jury of Award, Panama-Pacific International Exposition; awarded Presentation Medal, National Institute of Social Sciences. Member, American Medical Association, American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology, American Association for the Advancement of Science, New York Psychiatric Association (president), American Neurological Association, American Psychiatric Association (president), Association of Military Surgeons in the United States, Phi Sigma Kappa. Clubs: Century, Larchmont Yacht, Army and Navy (Washington, D. C.). Author of chapter on "Immigration," in *Modern Treatment of Mental and Nervous Diseases,* 1913; chapter on "Mental Hygiene," *American Year-Book,* 1917–20, and in *Preventive Medicine and Hygiene,* 1916–20, etc. Contributor on psychiatry and mental hygiene to magazines and scientific journals.

OBITUARY: DR. HENRY KOPLIK

Dr. Henry Koplik was born in New York City on October 2, 1859. He died in his 69th year on April 30, 1927, of myocardial insufficiency due to severe disease of the coronary arteries. At the time of his death there was no more distinguished pediatrician in America, nor one more widely known in the world.

His general education was obtained at the College of the City of New York, where he received the degree of A.B. in 1878. His medical studies were carried on at the College of Physicians and Surgeons (Columbia University), from which he was graduated in 1881. A short time after he completed his term of interneship at Bellevue Hospital he left for Europe, where he spent one and one-half years in study in Berlin, Prague, and Vienna. Of all the distinguished teachers under whom he studied in these places the one who most influenced him was Professor Alois Epstein, who